

Remarks:

Claims 17-31 stand rejected under 35 USC § 112 as being indefinite. Applicant would like to express appreciation for the Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 17-24 if amended to overcome the rejections under 35 USC § 112. Applicant has amended claims 17, 18, 25 and 28 to address the concerns raised by the Examiner.

Claims 25 and 28-31 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,204,669 ("Dorfe") in view of U.S. Publication No. 2004/0090925 ("Schoeberl"). Claims 28-31 depend from independent claim 25. After acknowledging that Dorfe does not teach calculation of topology information as required by claim 25, the Examiner asserts that Schoeberl discloses "an architecture where after a network reset, which includes the addition or removal of nodes (interruption of a contact) [0050], a current topology (data registered after the interruption of a contact) is compared to a reference topology (data registered before the interruption of a contact) [0050]." Applicant agrees that Schoeberl detects topology changes after a system reset. This, however, is not what is claimed by Applicant. Indeed, at paragraph [0014] of the present specification, Applicant explains benefits of the claimed system as follows:

The system and method according to the present invention have the additional advantages of providing a modular analytical system with a high degree of flexibility so that, for example, individual modules can be removed from or added to the analytical system at any desired time. Since it is not necessary to reset the system in order to carry out the method, the method can consequently also be used while the system is operating and not only during a special initialization sequence. Hence, the system and method according to the embodiment of the present invention allow an automatic calculation of the relative arrangement of individual modules and enable it to be advantageously visualized in a suitable form for a user. Thus, it supports the requirement for example for medical devices constructed in a modular manner which aim at a plug and play operation. In this connection the term "plug and play" means among others that it is not necessary to reset the entire system after a module has been added or removed.

To further clarify the distinction between topological calculation of the present invention from the disclosure of Schoeberl, and to expedite allowance of the remaining claims, Applicant has amended claim 25 to read, in relevant part, "a computing unit to calculate the topology of the analytical system on the basis of a comparison of module identification information that was

registered before interrupting the contact between the central unit and the module with module identification information that was registered while the contact was interrupted." As amended, claim 25 clearly requires a comparison of module identification information registered before interrupting a contact between a central unit and a module, with module identification information registered while the contact was interrupted. Clearly nothing in the cited references discloses registering module identification information while a contact between a central unit and a module is interrupted, for purposes of the comparison of claim 25 or otherwise. Regarding Schoeberl in particular, the data reflecting the current topology is data registered after the contact is interrupted (i.e., after a system reset). Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 25, as amended, and dependent claims 28-31 should be allowed.

Applicant has submitted herewith a Request for Extension of Time and the associated fee. Applicant believes that no additional fees are due in connection with this submission, however, if any fees are necessary, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-0390, Baker & Daniels.

If there are any questions regarding any of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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